

# MISSOURI CONSERVATION *Employee* SHOWCASE

## Brian Sturm Soil Conservation Technician, Chillicothe

**B**rian Sturm hasn't figured out how to be two places at the same time, but the NRCS soil conservation technician in Chillicothe, Missouri, might have come up with the next best thing. Sturm has developed a way to use a global positioning system (GPS) device to do the work of two people in laying out parallel terraces.

Sturm doesn't take credit for the original idea, but he borrowed a "light bar" GPS system from a Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District board member and installed it on the NRCS all-terrain vehicle (ATV).



"Basically, once you have a terrace line laid out, you can drive the ATV down the hill and the GPS will match parallel to the first terrace that was laid out," Sturm explains. "It saves a lot of walking, and it saves a lot of time."

It also saves a lot of labor because prior to using the GPS system, laying out parallel terraces required two people walking and using a measuring tape to stake the next terrace in the system.

Sturm says developing the GPS system, which has been copied by some other NRCS offices in Missouri that design parallel terraces, is the contribution that he is most proud of so far in his three-year career with NRCS.

As for what it's like to work for the agency, Sturm, who worked eight years as a carpenter, says he enjoys the people and likes the variety of things he gets to do.

"The variety is a good thing. No two jobs that I work on are the same," he says.

When he's not helping people help the land, Sturm likes to hunt and fish and spend time with his wife and two children.

Now if he could just figure out how to be two places at the same time!